

REMARKS

This Amendment is submitted in response to the Office Action mailed on October 2, 2006. Pursuant to the Amendment, Claims 1-5, 9-33, 44-68, 74, 76, 85-89, and 94-105 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer and Claim 7 has been amended. This amendment does not add new matter.

At the outset, Applicants note that the Patent Office has found Claims 34-43, 69-73, 75, 77-84, 90-93, and 106-110 allowable. Applicants thank the Examiner for the Notice of Allowable Subject Matter. The Patent Office has also only objected to Claims 7 and 8 stating that if they were placed in independent form, they would be in a condition for allowance. Accordingly, Claim 7, which depended from Claim 1, has been amended to include all of the limitations of Claim 1. Claim 8 depends from Claim 7 so Applicants respectfully submit that both Claims 7 and 8 are in a condition for allowance.

Claims 1-5, 9-14, and 16-33 stand provisionally rejected on the grounds of non-statutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over co-pending Application No.: 10/930,975. Applicants have cancelled these claims without prejudice or disclaimer. Applicants do not admit that the double patenting rejection is proper. Applicants have cancelled the claims so as to place the above-identified patent application in a condition for allowance and reserve the right to file these claims in a continuation application.

Claims 21-33 and 102-105 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103. Applicants, without admitting that the obviousness rejection is proper, have cancelled these claims without prejudice or disclaimer, reserving the right to file these claims in a continuation application and traverse the obviousness rejection.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that the patent application now only contains allowable subject matter. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the above-identified patent application be passed to allowance. Applicants note for the record that they are submitting herewith a document identifying what Applicants believe are the related co-pending patent applications as well as the substantive Office Actions that have issued in those applications. Applicants request that before the Patent Office passes this application to allowance, that the Patent Office considers these documents.

Respectfully submitted,

BELL, BOYD & LLOYD LLC

BY 

Robert M. Barrett
Reg. No. 30,142
Customer No.: 29156

Dated: October 27, 2006